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STRACZYNSKI • GARNEY

# THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN<sup>®</sup>

BACK IN BLACK





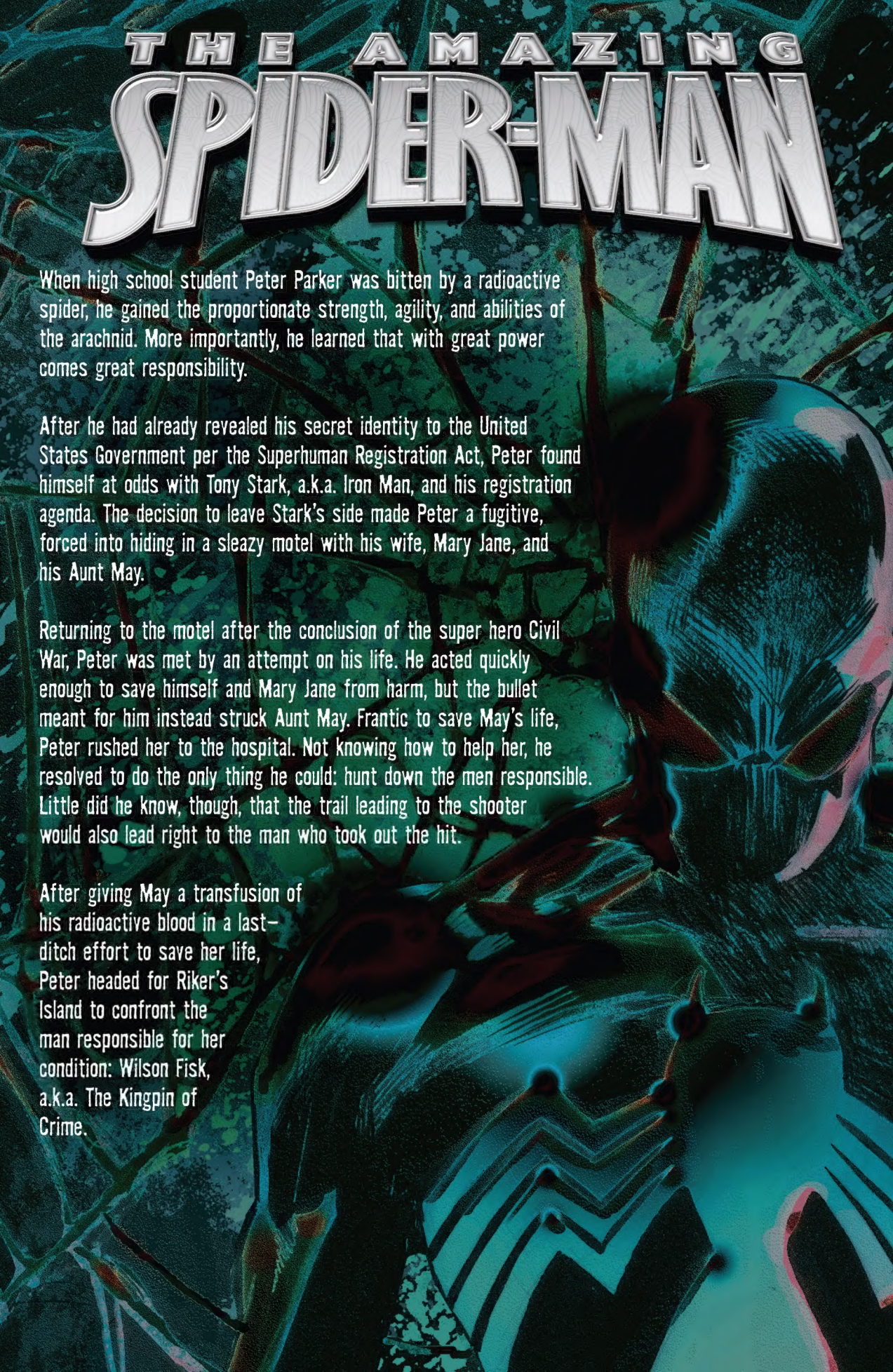
# THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

When high school student Peter Parker was bitten by a radioactive spider, he gained the proportionate strength, agility, and abilities of the arachnid. More importantly, he learned that with great power comes great responsibility.

After he had already revealed his secret identity to the United States Government per the Superhuman Registration Act, Peter found himself at odds with Tony Stark, a.k.a. Iron Man, and his registration agenda. The decision to leave Stark's side made Peter a fugitive, forced into hiding in a sleazy motel with his wife, Mary Jane, and his Aunt May.

Returning to the motel after the conclusion of the super hero Civil War, Peter was met by an attempt on his life. He acted quickly enough to save himself and Mary Jane from harm, but the bullet meant for him instead struck Aunt May. Frantic to save May's life, Peter rushed her to the hospital. Not knowing how to help her, he resolved to do the only thing he could: hunt down the men responsible. Little did he know, though, that the trail leading to the shooter would also lead right to the man who took out the hit.

After giving May a transfusion of his radioactive blood in a last-ditch effort to save her life, Peter headed for Riker's Island to confront the man responsible for her condition: Wilson Fisk, a.k.a. The Kingpin of Crime.





AS FAR AS  
AMBIENCE IS CONCERNED,  
IT'S NOT QUITE WHAT I  
WOULD HAVE CHOSEN FOR  
THE GRAND FINALE OF OUR  
LONG ASSOCIATION--

--SOMETHING  
PERHAPS A BIT  
MORE REGAL, OR  
EVEN A TOUCH  
GLADIATORIAL--

--BUT AS  
ARENAS GO, AT LEAST  
THIS ONE CERTAINLY COMES  
WITH A VERY APPRECIATIVE  
AUDIENCE, WOULDN'T YOU  
SAY, MR. PARKER?

# BACK IN BLACK

PART  
4  
OF 5

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AS I LOOK AROUND THIS ROOM, I SEE MURDERERS AND RAPISTS, THIEVES AND THUGS, PERVERTS AND PSYCHOTICS. MEN WHO MAY ONCE HAVE ASPIRED TO BE MORE THAN THESE THINGS, BUT HAVE SETTLED FOR THE NAMES THEY HAVE BEEN GIVEN.

BUT NO MATTER HOW DEBASED, PERVERSE, CRUDE OR FALLEN, THERE'S NOT A MAN HERE WHO DOES NOT LOOK DOWN ON ONE PARTICULAR BREED OF HUMANITY.



THE CHUMP.



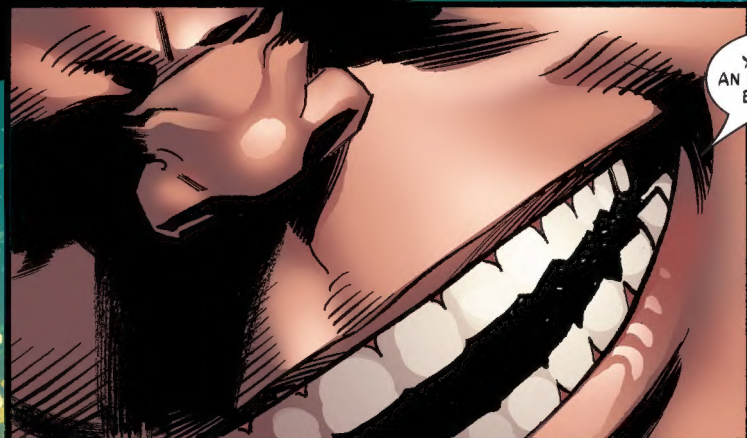
A CHUMP IS SOMEONE WHO BELIEVES IN THE GREATER GOOD. WHO BELIEVES THAT GOOD TRIUMPHS **BECAUSE** IT IS GOOD. TRUSTS THE GOVERNMENT, TRUSTS HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, TRUSTS THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK WHO SAYS "SHOW THE WORLD YOUR TRUE FACE, PETER. IT'LL BE OKAY."

AND WE ALL SAW THAT FACE, DIDN'T WE? THE FACE OF A CHUMP.



A CHUMP WHO IS NOW HUNTED BY THE PEOPLE HE BELIEVED IN, SPURNED BY THE SYSTEM HE SUPPORTED, ABANDONED BY THE FRIENDS HE THOUGHT HE HAD, HIS WIFE LIVING IN A TWO-BIT MOTEL AND HIS DEAR, SWEET AUNT DYING IN A HOSPITAL BED BECAUSE HE COULDN'T EVEN STAND STILL LONG ENOUGH TO TAKE THE BULLET THAT WAS HIS BY RIGHT.





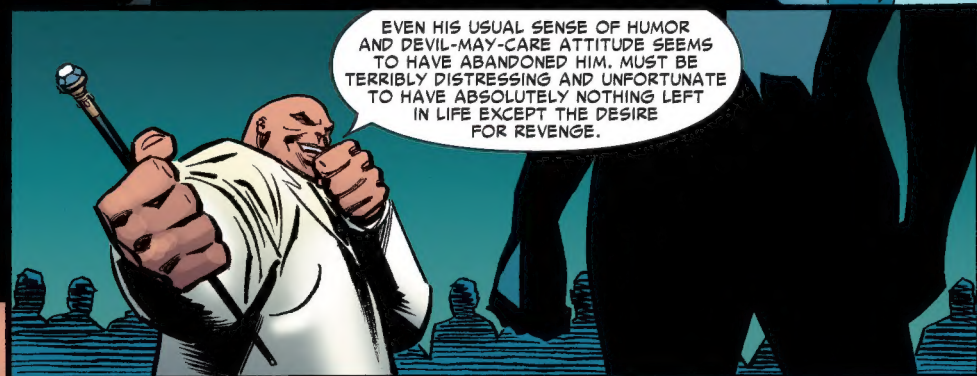
BUT I GUESS  
YOU CAN'T MAKE  
AN OMELETTE WITHOUT  
BREAKING A FEW  
OLD LADIES.







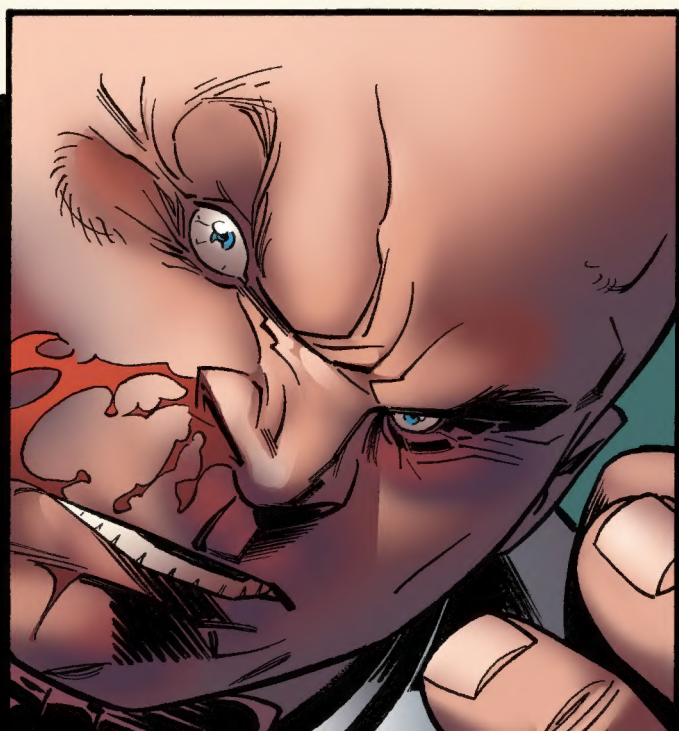
EVEN HIS USUAL SENSE OF HUMOR AND DEVIL-MAY-CARE ATTITUDE SEEMS TO HAVE ABANDONED HIM. MUST BE TERRIBLY DISTRESSING AND UNFORTUNATE TO HAVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING LEFT IN LIFE EXCEPT THE DESIRE FOR REVENGE.



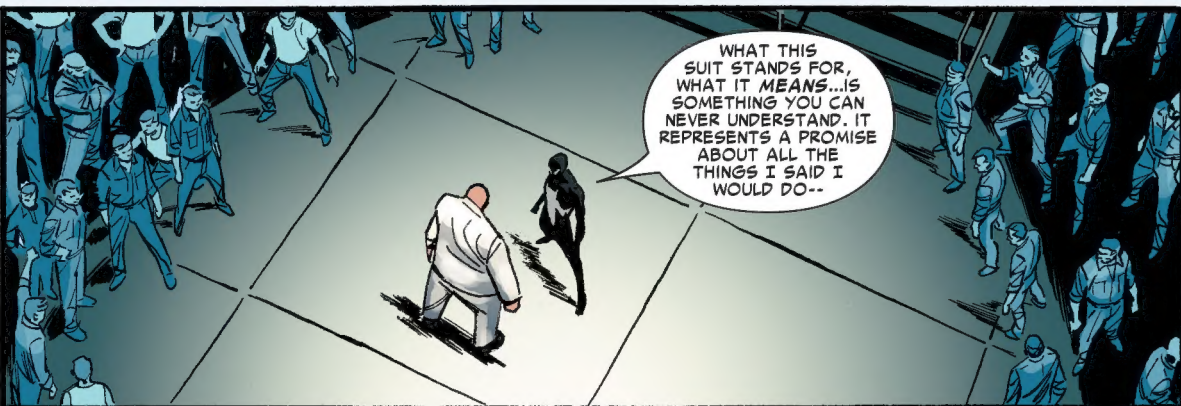
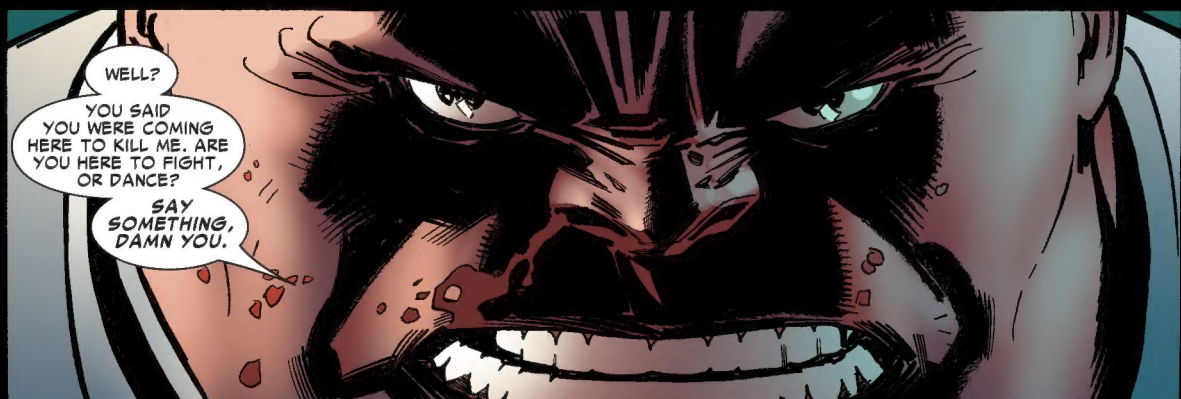
WHICH IS ESPECIALLY UNFORTUNATE SINCE ONCE YOU'VE MADE A MOCKERY OF EVERYTHING YOU STAND FOR AND VICTIMIZED THE WOMEN YOU SAID YOU LOVED, REALLY, WHAT'S LEFT EXCEPT HUMOR?



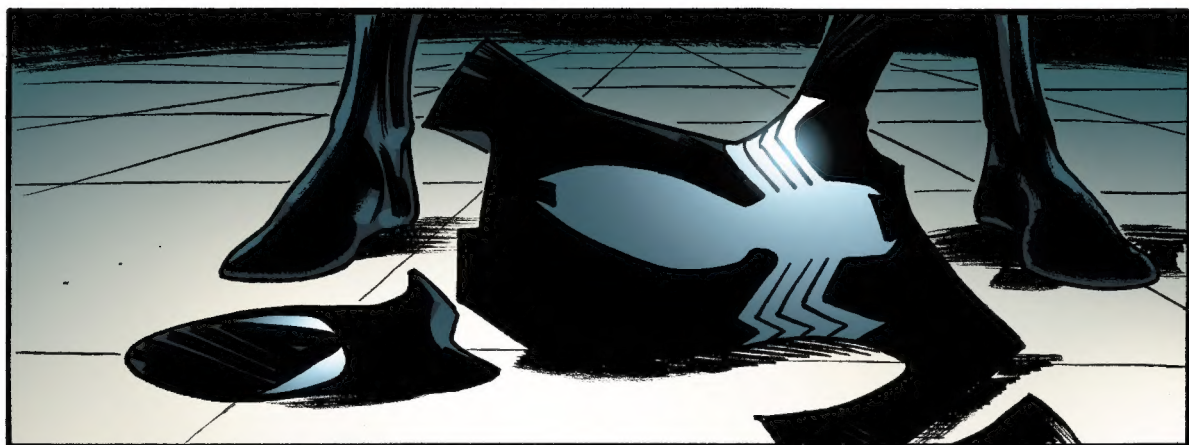
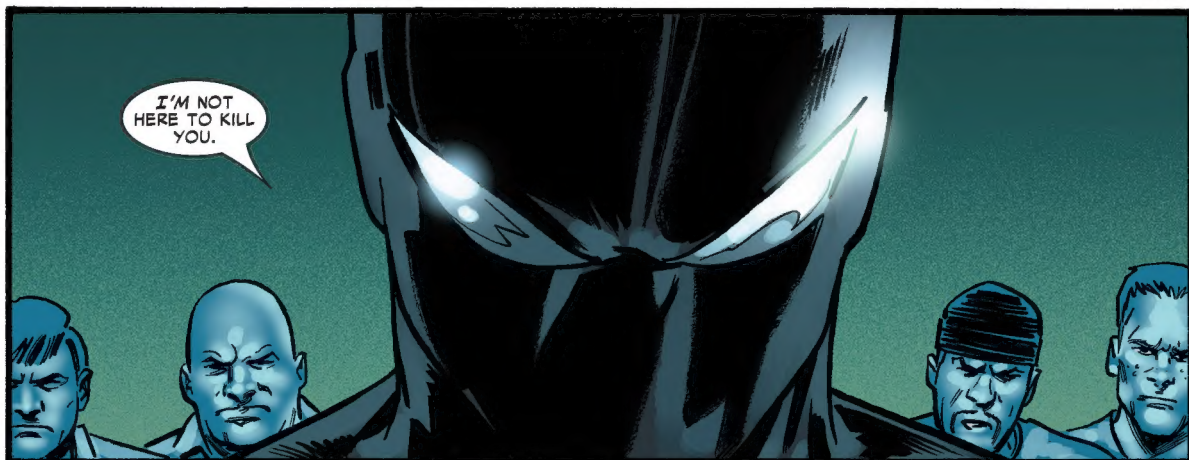


















THE CROWD ROARS  
AS THEY FIGHT.

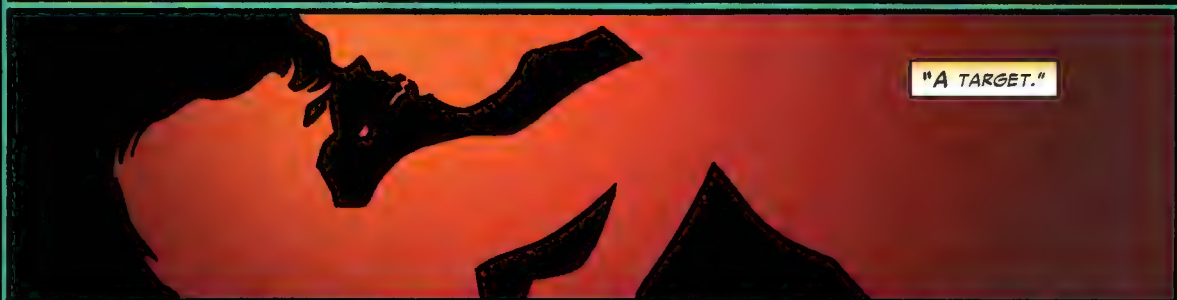




"NO. NOT  
A MAN."



"A TARGET."



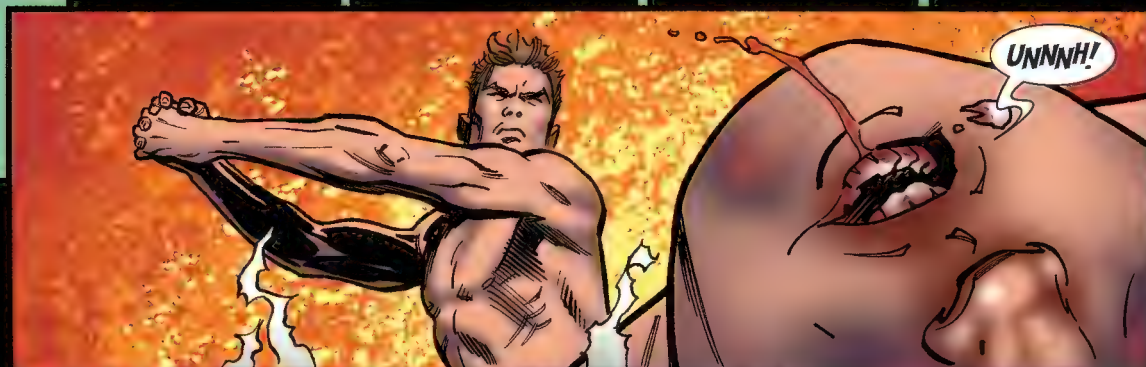
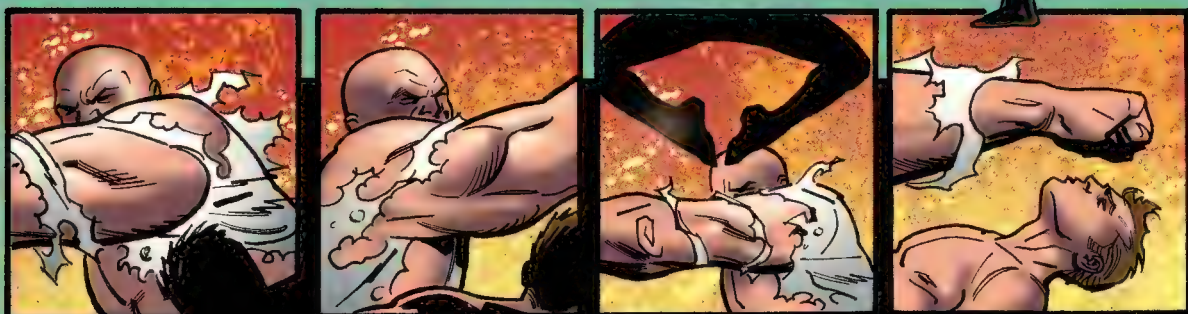
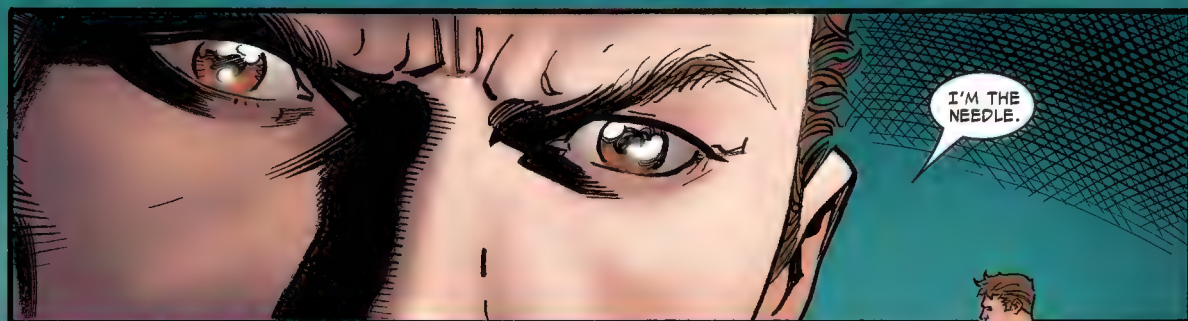
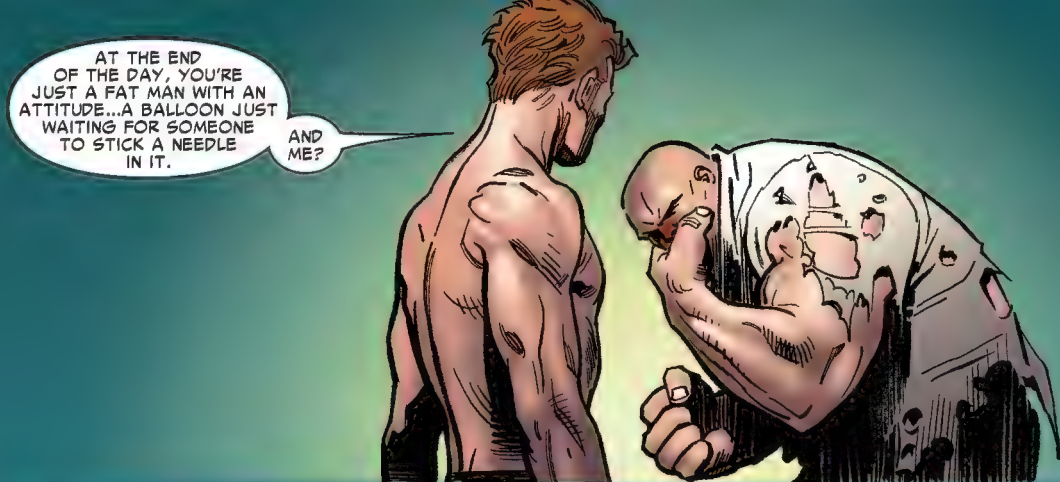
YOU FORGOT  
SOMETHING, FISK. SOMETHING  
YOU SHOULD'VE REMEMBERED  
BEFORE YOU DECIDED TO PUT A  
BULLET THROUGH SOMEONE TOO  
OLD AND FRAIL TO GET OUT  
OF THE WAY.

AND  
IT'S THIS.

FOR ALL YOUR  
MONEY, FOR ALL YOUR  
CRUELTY, FOR ALL YOUR  
BIG TALK...YOU DON'T HAVE  
ANY REAL POWER. YOU CAN'T  
FLY, CAN'T STICK TO WALLS,  
CAN'T TURN INTO LIVING FLAME  
OR STRETCH OUT ACROSS A  
TWENTY-FOOT ROOM.







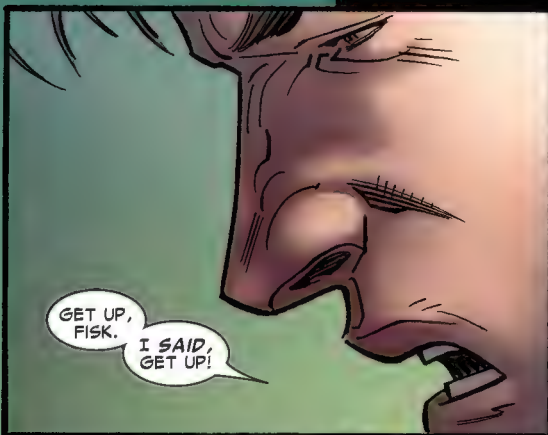




...KILL YOU...  
SWEAR TO GOD  
I'LL KILL...

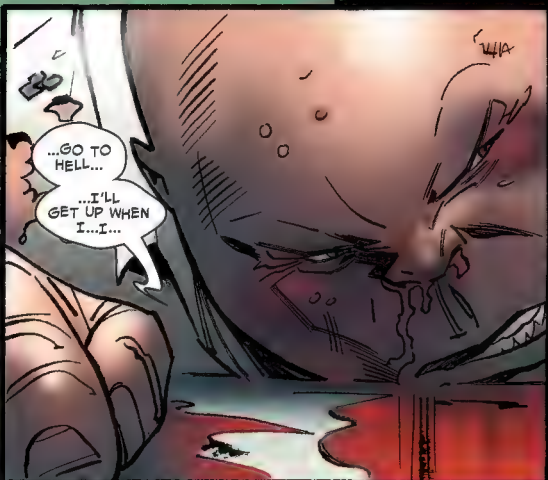


HUNH!



GET UP,  
FISK.

I SAID,  
GET UP!



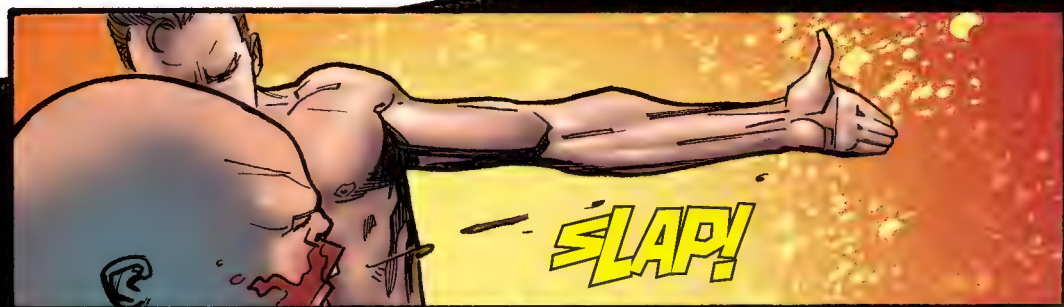
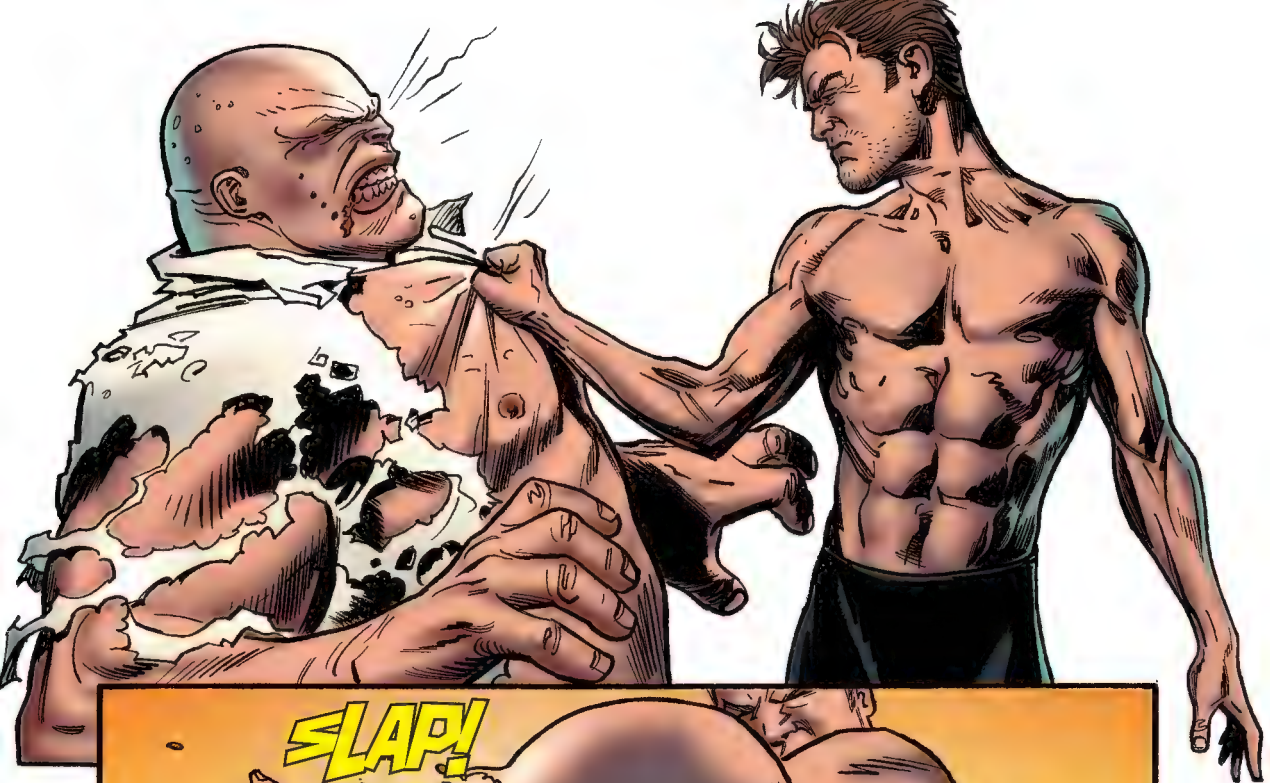
...GO TO  
HELL...

...I'LL  
GET UP WHEN  
I...I...



...CAN'T...









BALLOON.  
NEEDLE. NOW.  
HERE'S HOW  
IT'S GOING TO  
HAPPEN.



I POUR A STREAM OF WEBBING DEEP INTO YOUR THROAT, YOUR ESOPHAGUS, ALL THE WAY DOWN INTO YOUR LUNGS, FILLING THEM COMPLETELY. THE ONLY WAY TO REMOVE IT SURGICALLY WOULD BE TO CUT OUT YOUR LUNGS, WHICH COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE DONE BEFORE YOU'D DIE FROM LACK OF OXYGEN.



I TURN YOUR ENTIRE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM INTO ONE BIG SOLID CHUNK OF USELESS TISSUE AND WEBBING.

IT TAKES THREE SECONDS.



ONE...

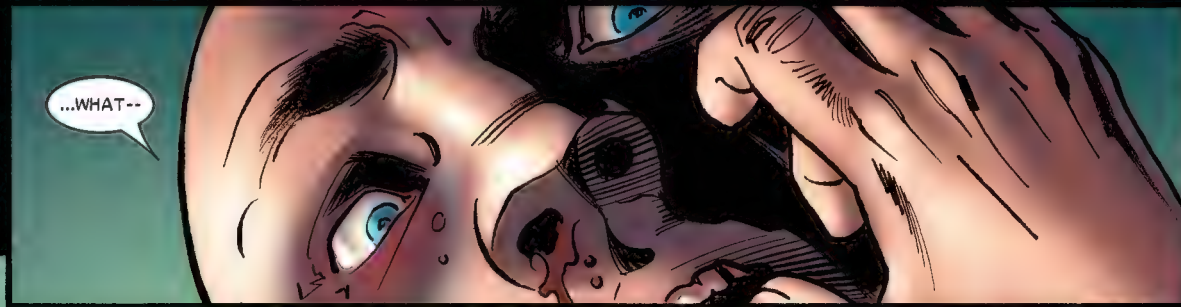


...TWO...



...THREE.





...WHAT--



UNH!



IF YOU'RE GOING...TO KILL ME...GET IT OVER WITH.

OH, I WILL. I SAID I WAS GOING TO KILL YOU, AND I AM.



BUT I DIDN'T SAY I WAS GOING TO DO IT TODAY.



YOU SEE, I'VE LEARNED SOMETHING FROM YOU, FISK. SOMETHING ABOUT CRUELTY... AND TIMING.

I'VE DONE SOMETHING FAR WORSE THAN KILL YOU, FISK.

I'VE BEATEN YOU.



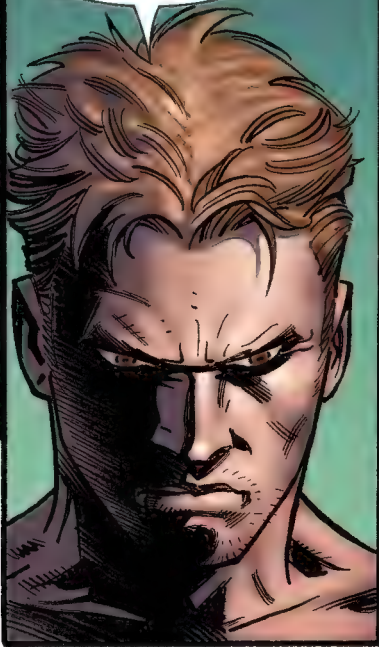


AND EVERY MAN  
IN THIS ROOM SAW  
ME BEAT YOU.

AND THEY WILL  
TELL THEIR PALS, AND  
THOSE GUYS WILL TELL  
THEIR PALS, AND ON,  
AND ON...

...AND SOON THE WHOLE CITY,  
THE WHOLE COUNTRY, WILL KNOW  
WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW...THAT  
YOU'VE BEEN BEATEN, IN PUBLIC,  
ONE-ON-ONE.

AND FOR A  
MAN AS **PRIDEFUL** AS  
YOU, WHO **NEEDS** FOR  
EVERYONE TO BELIEVE HE  
CAN'T BE BEATEN...THAT'S  
THE WORST PAIN YOU  
CAN EVER FEEL.



I WANT  
YOU TO LIVE WITH THAT  
KNOWLEDGE BECAUSE I KNOW  
IT WILL TEAR YOU APART DEEP  
INSIDE EVERY WAKING MOMENT  
OF EVERY DAY. I WANT YOU TO  
LIVE IN THAT KIND OF PERSONAL  
HELL. I WANT YOU TO  
**BURN, FISK.**

FOR A  
WHILE, AT  
LEAST. AND  
THEN...



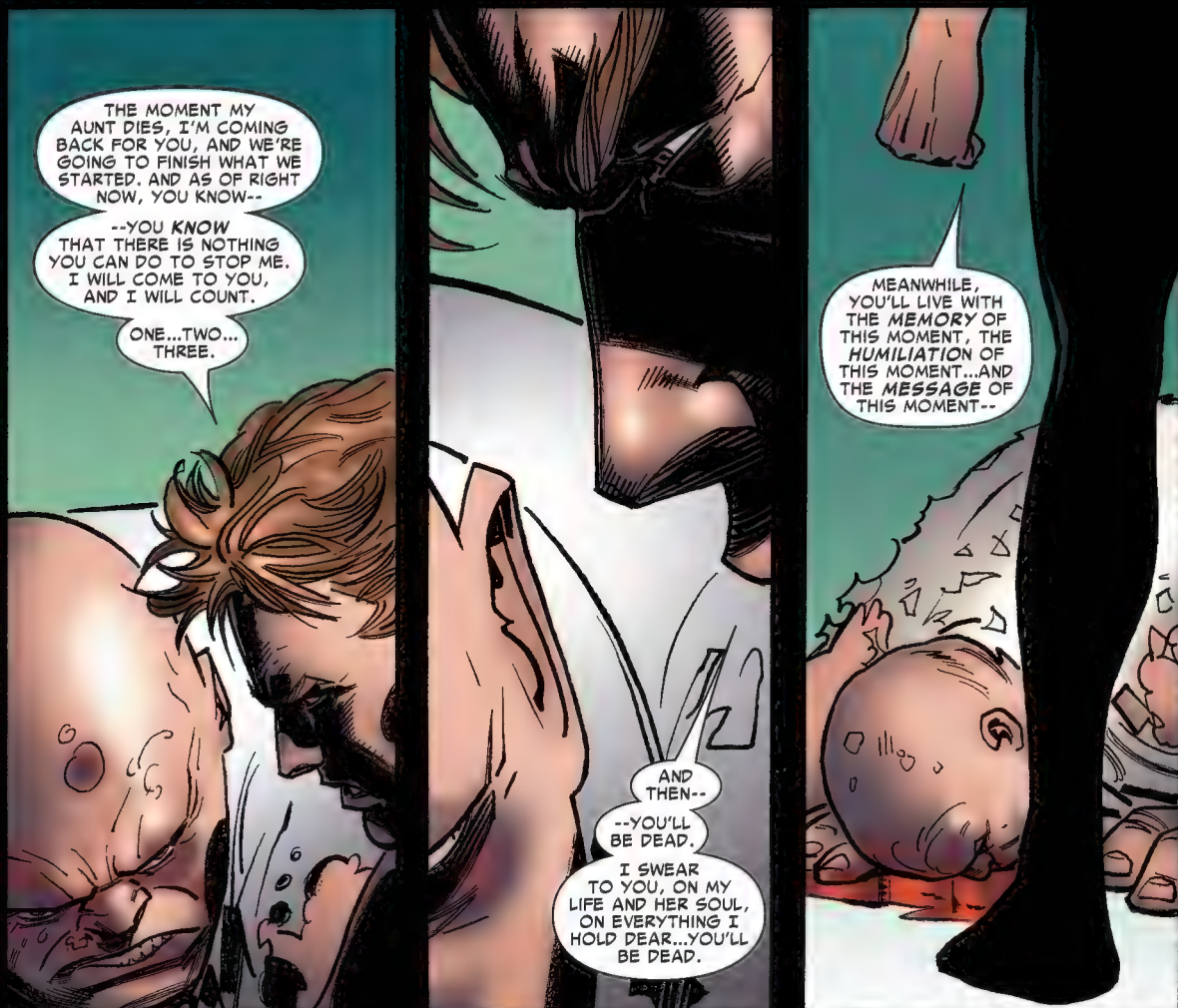
YOU SEE, I'VE ALWAYS TRIED TO  
AVOID KILLING ANYONE PARTLY FOR  
MY OWN PRINCIPLES, AND  
PARTLY BECAUSE I WAS ALWAYS  
AFRAID HOW IT WOULD AFFECT  
MY FAMILY IF I KILLED SOMEONE.  
BUT IF MY AUNT IS DEAD, WELL...  
THAT TAKES CARE OF ONE  
REASON, AND THE OTHER...  
WELL, I CAN MAKE AN  
EXCEPTION.



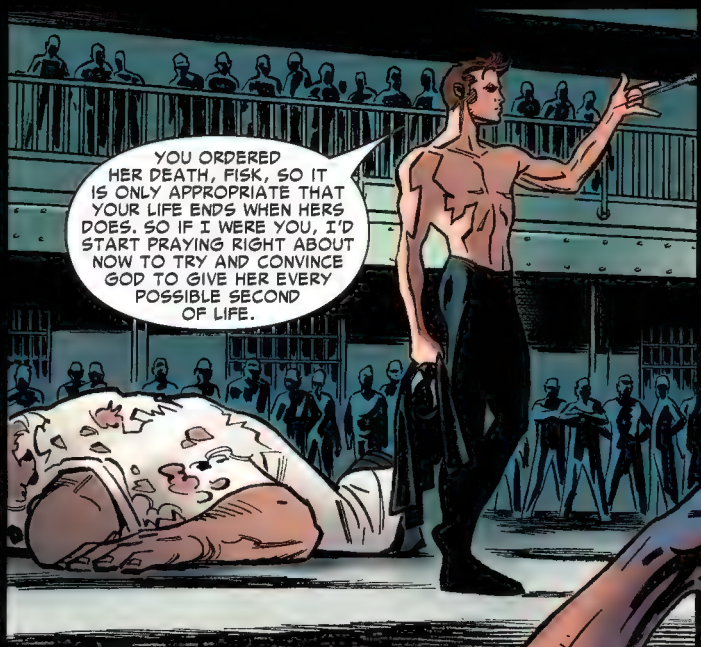
SO. HERE'S  
HOW IT'S GOING  
TO HAPPEN.











YOU ORDERED  
HER DEATH, FISK, SO IT  
IS ONLY APPROPRIATE THAT  
YOUR LIFE ENDS WHEN HERS  
DOES. SO IF I WERE YOU, I'D  
START PRAYING RIGHT ABOUT  
NOW TO TRY AND CONVINCE  
GOD TO GIVE HER EVERY  
POSSIBLE SECOND  
OF LIFE.

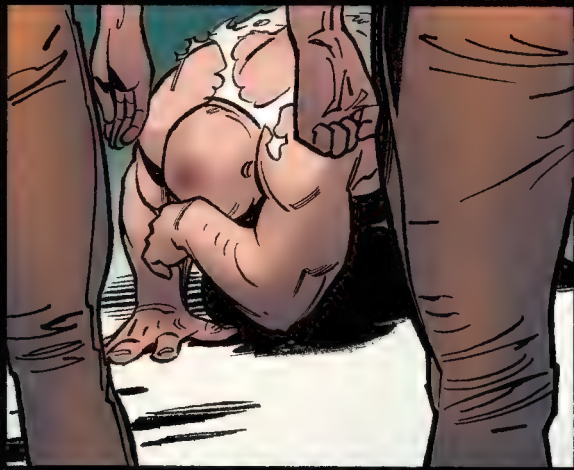
BUT TO TELL  
YOU THE TRUTH, IN  
YOUR POSITION, I  
WOULDN'T COUNT TOO  
MUCH ON GOD IF I  
WERE YOU.

SEE YOU  
AROUND, MR.  
FISK.

COUNT  
ON IT.









"DID YOU GET DONE  
EVERYTHING YOU HAD  
TO DO, PETER?"

YEAH...  
ALL DONE.

FOR NOW,  
ANYWAY, BUT  
LATER--



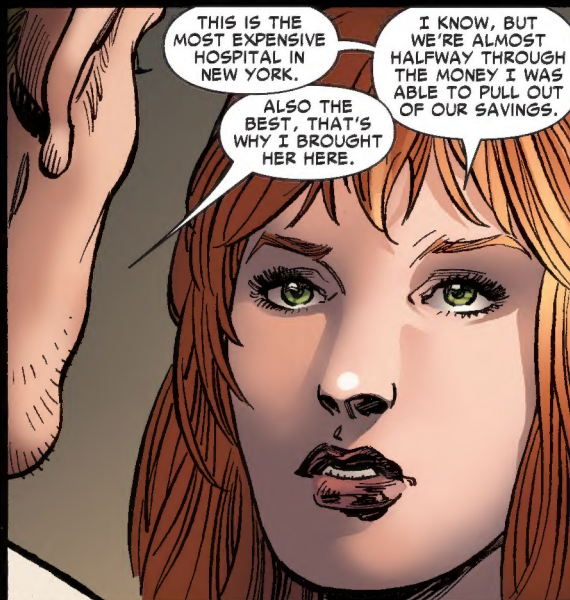




THAT'S SOMETHING WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT.

WE CAN'T KEEP HER HERE MUCH LONGER, PETER.

I DON'T--



THIS IS THE MOST EXPENSIVE HOSPITAL IN NEW YORK.

I KNOW, BUT WE'RE ALMOST HALFWAY THROUGH THE MONEY I WAS ABLE TO PULL OUT OF OUR SAVINGS.

ALSO THE BEST, THAT'S WHY I BROUGHT HER HERE.

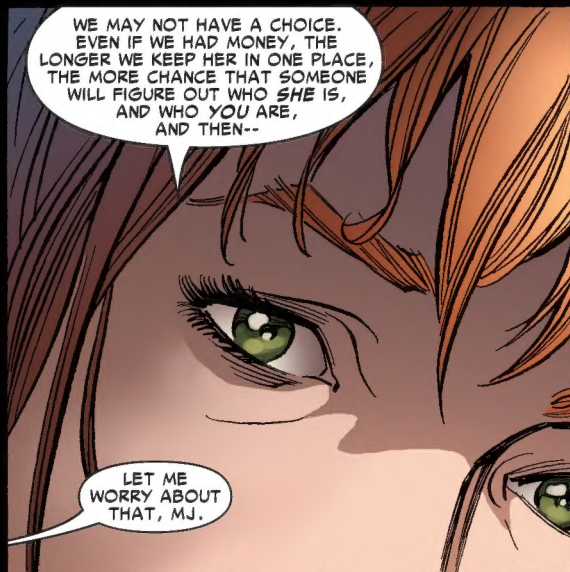


IF WE MOVE HER SOMEPLACE--

CHEAPER?

--LESS BREATHTAKINGLY EXPENSIVE, WE CAN MAKE THE MONEY LAST LONGER, MAYBE UNTIL SHE WAKES UP OUT OF THE COMA.

WE CAN'T RISK MOVING HER RIGHT NOW.



WE MAY NOT HAVE A CHOICE. EVEN IF WE HAD MONEY, THE LONGER WE KEEP HER IN ONE PLACE, THE MORE CHANCE THAT SOMEONE WILL FIGURE OUT WHO *SHE* IS, AND WHO *YOU* ARE, AND THEN--

LET ME WORRY ABOUT THAT, M.J.

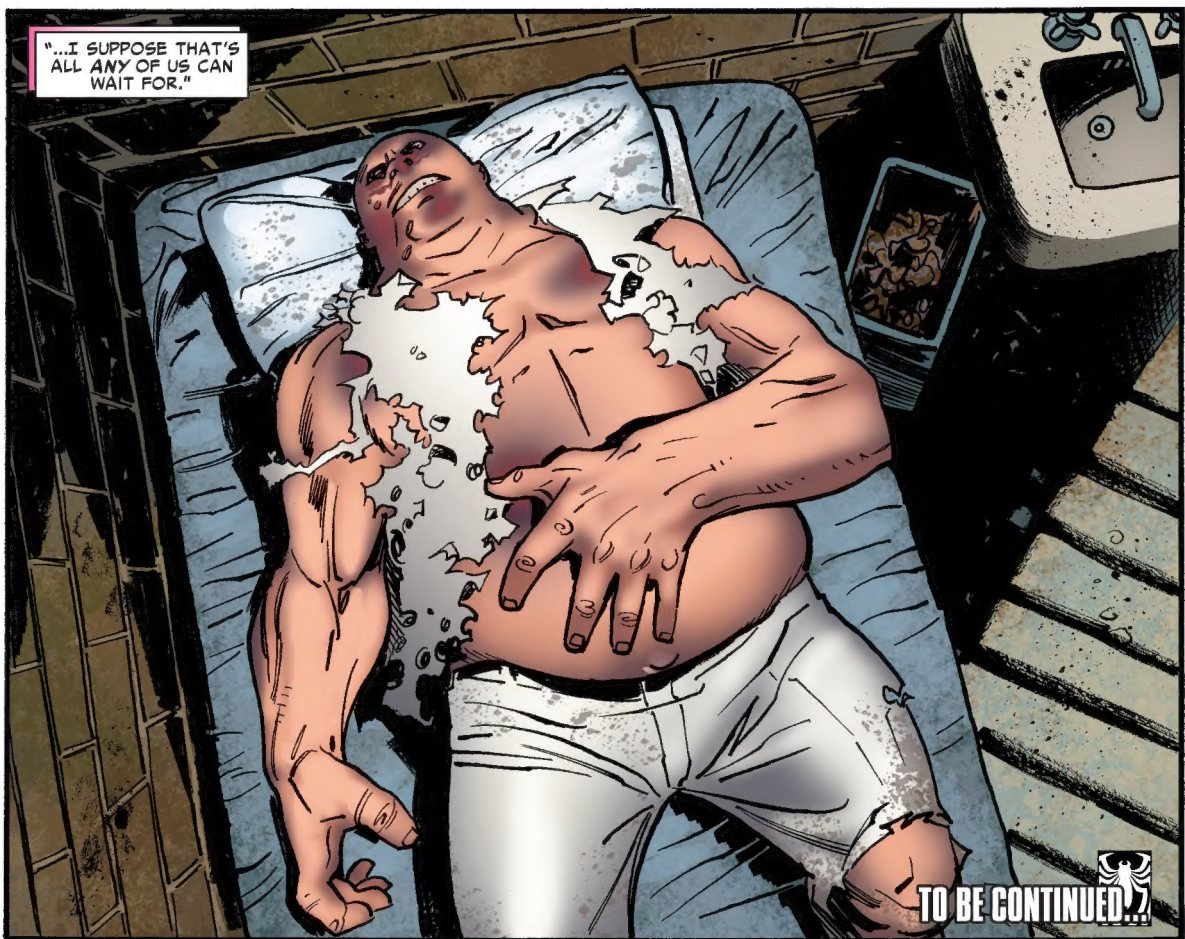
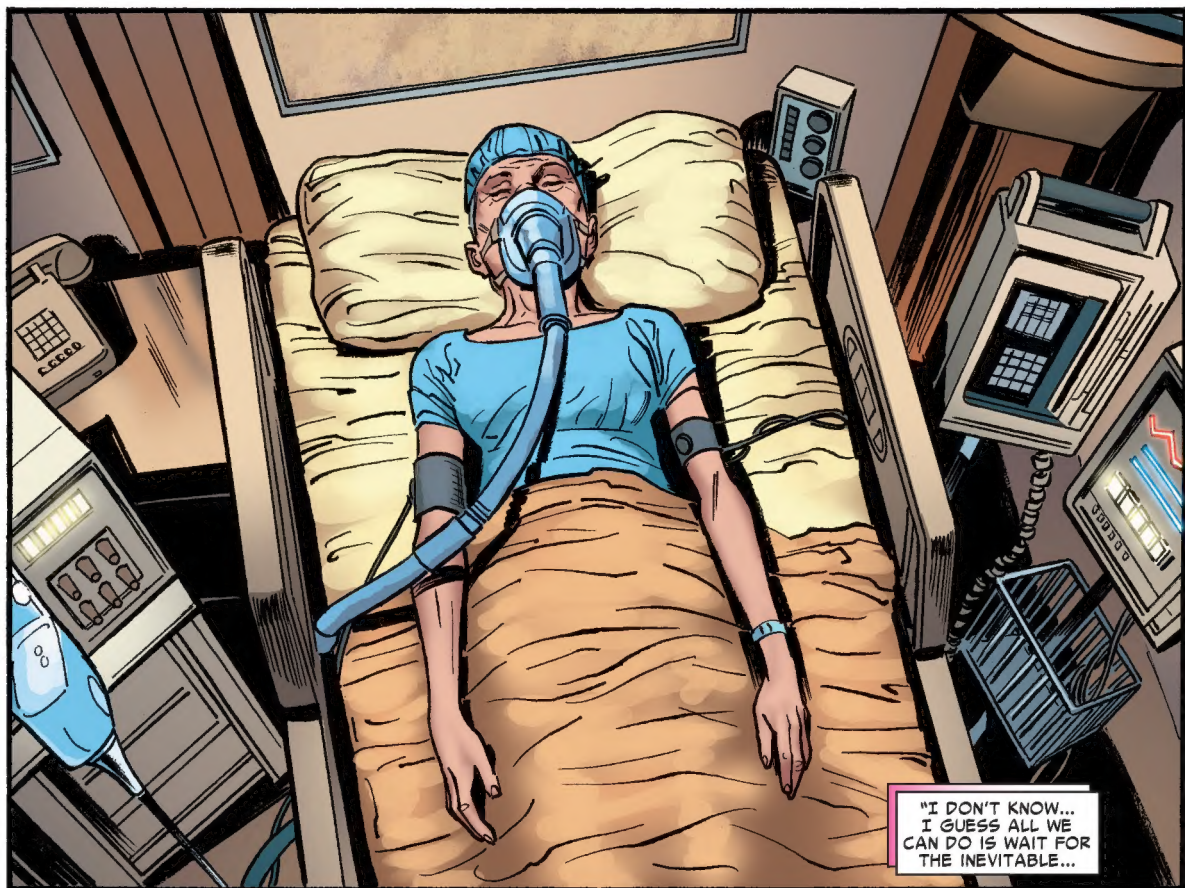


MEANWHILE, IF MONEY'S A PROBLEM, THEN I'LL JUST GET MONEY.

HOW?

I DON'T KNOW, BUT I'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT. SO WHAT'S NEXT AFTER THAT?







# NEXT ISSUE:



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